

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 298860

FOLLOWING REPEAT MASERU 1308 ACTION SECSTATE NAIROBI

INFO GABORONE MBABANE SEOUL 11 DEC

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 1308

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LT, KN, KS

SUBJECT: LESOTHO TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH
KOREA

REF: NAIROBI 10690 (NOTAL)

1. PERMANENT SECRETARY GOL MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ODILON SEFAKO, ADVISED CHARGE TODAY IN REPLY TO DIRECT INQUIRY THAT LESOTHO IS NEGOTIATING WITH NORTH KOREA WITH A VIEW TO ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. SEFAKO SAID LEVEL AND MODALITIES OF RELATIONSHIP STILL SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN JANUARY. HE SAID HE COULD PROVIDE NO FURTHER INFORMATION AT THIS TIME AND REQUESTED THIS INFORMATION BE HELD IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE UNTIL PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT MADE. SEFAKO SAID THIS DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT AFFECT LESOTHO'S RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH KOREA AND, IN FACT, LESOTHO WANTED TO STRENGTHEN ITS RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA. HE WOULD NOT SAY WHERE AND HOW NEGOTIATIONS ARE BEING CARRIED ON.
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2. FOR NAIROBI: WE MADE NO MENTION IN CONVERSATION WITH SEFAKO THAT AMBASSADOR YEON HAD RECEIVED INFORMATION ON ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA FROM GOL HIGH COMMISSIONER IN NAIROBI. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER HIGH COMMISSIONER THERE WAS AUTHORIZED TO PASS INFORMATION. IN CONFIRMING TO YEON THAT LESOTHO INTENDS TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA, REQUEST YOU PROTECT OUR SOURCE. IF YEON INTENDS TO TAKE MATTER UP WITH GOL, HE SHOULD NOT MENTION THAT WE HAVE CONFIRMED HIGH COMMISSIONER'S REPORT.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE REALIZE AMBASSADOR YEON HAS LARGE AREA TO COVER AND PROBABLY HAS VERY LIMITED RESOURCES, OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN ESPECIALLY ZEALOUS OR EFFECTIVE IN PURSUING ROK INTERESTS IN LESOTHO. HIS USUAL PATTERN IS TO VISIT LESOTHO ONLY WHEN IMPORTANT ISSUES ARISE, SUCH AS KOREA IN UNGA. WE BELIEVE MORE REGULAR, ROUTINE VISITS WOULD PAY DIVIDENDS, BOTH IN KEEPING HIMSELF INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS AND IN CULTIVATING GOL. FURTHERMORE, WHEN YEON DOES VISIT, HE MAKES NO EFFORT TO KEEP USSINFORMED OF HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH GOL OFFICIALS. FOR EXAMPLE, DURING YEON'S LAST VISIT TO GET SUPPORT ON KOREAN RESOLUTIONS IN UNGA, CHARGE HAD TO RUN HIM DOWN AT AIRPORT AS HE WAS DTRTO FIND OUT WHAT GOL RESPONSE HAD BEEN. WE HOPE HE WILL BE MORE CONSCIENTIOUS IN FUTURE IN KEEPING USINFORMED OF HIS VISITS AND ACTIVITIES, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE MAY BE ASKED TO FOLLOW UP.

4. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS AS TO WHETHER EMBASSY SHOULD MAKE FURTHER INQUIRIES OR APPROACHES TO GOL ON THIS SUBJECT.
HAUGHT UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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